

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A service device that sequentially provides a service in response to a service request from a client, the client being connected to the service device via  
5 a network, the service device comprising:

a detection module that detects whether or not the service device is capable of providing a service within a preset time period; and

a notification module that notifies the client of the result of detection regardless of whether or not the service request has been received from the  
10 client.

2. The service device in accordance with claim 1, wherein

the notification module notifies the client of the result of detection when a change is detected between a state in which the service device is capable of  
15 providing a service within the preset time period and a state in which the service device is incapable of providing a service within the preset time period.

3. The service device in accordance with claim 1, wherein

the detection module detects whether or not the service device is capable  
20 of providing a service in real time.

4. The service device in accordance with claim 1, further comprising:

a setting module that registers the client as a target of notification,

wherein the notification module notifies the registered client of the result  
25 of detection.

5. The service device in accordance with claim 4, further comprising:

a reception module that receives information from the client, the information relating to an attribute or type of a service required by the client,

5 wherein the setting module registers the client if the service device is capable of providing a service of the attribute or type.

6. The service device in accordance with claim 4, wherein

the setting module is capable of registering a plurality of the clients;

10 the setting module stores a use condition in connection with a specific client of the plurality of clients, the use condition being used for allowing the specific client to use the service device preferentially; and

when the use condition satisfied, the notification module further notifies the specific client of the satisfaction of the use condition.

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7. The service device in accordance with claim 6, wherein

when the use condition satisfied, the notification module further notifies a client other than the specific client that the service device became incapable of providing a service.

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8. A method in a service device that sequentially provides a service in response to a service request from a client, the client being connected to the service device via a network, the method comprising the steps of:

25 detecting whether or not the service device is capable of providing a service within a preset time period; and

notifying the client of the result of detection regardless of whether or not the service request has been received from the client.

9. The method in accordance with claim 8, wherein

5 the notifying step includes:

notifying the client of the result of detection when a change is detected between a state in which the service device is capable of providing a service within the preset time period and a state in which the service device is incapable of providing a service within the preset time period.

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10. The method in accordance with claim 8, wherein

the detecting step includes:

detecting whether or not the service device is capable of providing a service in real time.

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11. The method in accordance with claim 8, further comprising:

registering the client as a target of notification,

wherein the notifying step includes:

notifying the registered client of the result of detection.

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12. The method in accordance with claim 11, further comprising:

receiving information from the client, the information relating to an attribute or type of a service required by the client,

wherein the registering step includes:

25 registering the client if the service device is capable of providing a service

of the attribute or type.

13. The method in accordance with claim 11, wherein  
the registering step includes:

5           registering a plurality of the clients; and  
            registering a use condition in connection with a specific client of the  
plurality of clients, the use condition being used for allowing the specific client to  
use the service device preferentially, and  
            the method further comprises:  
10          when the use condition satisfied, notifying the specific client of the  
satisfaction of the use condition.

14. The method in accordance with claim 13, further comprising:  
when the use condition satisfied, notifying a client other than the specific  
15 client that the service device became incapable of providing a service.

15. A client that issues a service request to a service device via a  
network, the service device sequentially providing a service, the client  
comprising:  
20          a receive module that receives a result of detection from the service  
device regardless of whether or not the service request has been issued to the  
service device, the result of detection relating to whether or not the service  
device is capable of providing a service within a preset time period; and  
            an acquaint module that acquaints a user of the client with the result of  
25 detection regardless of whether or not the service request has been issued to the

service device.

16. The client in accordance with claim 15, further comprising:

5 a transmit module that transmits registration information to the service device, the registration information being used for registering the client at the service device, so that the client receives the result of detection from the service device.

10 17. A method, in a service system including a service device that sequentially provides a service and a client that issues a service request to the service device via a network, for acquainting a user of the client with information regarding the service device, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) the service device detecting whether or not the service device is capable of providing a service within a preset time period;

15 (b) the service device notifying the client of the result of detection, regardless of whether or not the service request has been issued from the client to the service device; and

(c) the client acquainting the user with the result of detection, regardless of whether or not the service request has been issued from the client to the  
20 service device.

18. A computer program product for causing a service device to notify a client of information, the service device sequentially providing a service in response to a service request from the client, the client being connected to the  
25 service device via a network, the computer program product comprising:

a computer readable recording medium; and  
a computer program stored on the computer readable recording medium,  
the computer program causing the service device to attain the functions  
of:

5           detecting whether or not the service device is capable of providing a  
service within a preset time period; and

          notifying the client of the result of detection, regardless of whether or  
not the service request has been received from the client.

10           19. A computer program product for causing a client to receive  
information from a service device, the client issuing a service request to the  
service device via a network, the service device sequentially providing a service,  
the computer program product comprising:

          a computer readable recording medium; and

15           a computer program stored on the computer readable recording medium,  
the computer program causing the client to attain the functions of:

          receiving a result of detection from the service device regardless of  
whether or not the service request has been issued to the service device, the  
result of detection relating to whether or not the service device is capable of  
20   providing a service within a preset time period; and

          acquainting a user of the client with the result of detection, regardless  
of whether or not the service request has been issued to the service device.